

EPA's Office of Environmental Justice
Briefing Details on Upcoming Administrative Changes
September 26, 2017 at 3:30 PM EDT

Briefing details:

- When: Tuesday, September 26
- Time: 330 PM (EDT)
- Participant Dial-in Number: (b) (6)
- 3500 WJCNorth

Agenda

- Introduction – Matthew Tejada, Director (Office of Environmental Justice)
- Briefing – Samantha Dravis, Associate Administrator (Office of Policy)
- Q&A from Stakeholders

Talking Points for Samantha Dravis

Thank you everyone for joining this call. We wanted to connect with you to share the news regarding the move of EPA's Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) to the Office of Policy (OP) within the Office of the Administrator.

I appreciate the close bond that the EJ movement and many communities and leaders feel for the EJ program. I know that many of you share credit for helping to establish an EJ program and focus at EPA and across the federal government. Because of that, we wanted to make sure that lines of communication are open during this time of transition.

It is important to both Administrator Pruitt and myself that the most underserved and overburdened communities have a meaningful say in environmental protection and regulation. I want to assure everyone that this move is being made so that EPA's EJ program can best pursue its mission to serve overburdened communities.

OP provides strong analysis and support for some of EPA's most important responsibilities. One of those is managing the agency's regulatory process. Let me be clear - EPA will continue to consider and incorporate environmental justice concerns into our regulatory process and this move enhances our ability to achieve this core function.

Through the Office of Sustainable Communities, soon to be renamed the Office of Community Revitalization, OP also provides technical assistance to help communities as they work to improve health, protect the environment,

and grow their economies. We will continue to work on the ground alongside community leaders to understand their challenges and needs.

And so by bringing together the collective resources and expertise of this organization and OEJ within the Office of Policy, each as independent offices, we will be better positioned to help those communities that need our assistance the most. We will provide a more comprehensive understanding of community needs and health disparities. That will allow us to better coordinate across our own programs and with our federal partners to ensure efforts are aligned and community needs are fully reflected in our actions and investments. It will also enable us to partner more effectively with states, tribes and local governments to support their efforts to engage with and answer the needs of their most vulnerable communities. And finally, it will allow us to collaborate more successfully with business and industry, academia, civil society and other stakeholders that share an interest in building strong, healthy and prosperous communities.

Because we are located in the Administrator's office and have cross-agency responsibilities, OEJ's new position within OP will also enable better support for meaningful engagement and public participation on policy and regulatory decisions. Finally, it will allow quicker elevation of issues to the Administrator and direct support for his leadership role on the Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice.

I firmly believe bringing OEJ into OP will enhance EPA's ability to meet our mission of protecting human health and the environment.

I look forward to working with all of you to advance shared goals for America's most vulnerable, underserved and overburdened communities.